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ABSTRACT

The agenda for a seminar on teaching human rights for the seminar centered on presentations of three background papers. Topics covered at the seminar: (1) teaching of human rights through the training of law enforcement personnel, lawyers, judges, and consideration of international standards vs. actual institutional practice; (2) teaching of human rights to teachers at all levels, including those at police academies with attention focused on questions of discipline(s), contents and methods; and (3) non-formal education and methods and their target groups--parents, religious leaders, labor union leaders, professional associations, and village councils, addressing the questions of individual and collective rights vs. duties, and inductive teaching (real-life situations). Discussions followed the presentations and are reflected in this report. A roster of participants is listed. (LAP)

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Centre for Human Rights
Geneva

The Teaching of Human Rights

Report of an international Seminar

Geneva, 5-9 December 1988

United Nations
New York, 1989

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Introduction

A Seminar on the teaching of human rights was held at the United Nations Office at Geneva, Switzerland, from 5 to 9 December 1988. The Seminar was one of many activities specially planned in honour of the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Forty-three Governments were invited to nominate participants, on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, past participation in United Nations human rights seminars, interest in the subject, and relevant experience. Participants from 39 Member Governments attended along with representatives of United Nations bodies, United Nations specialized agencies, other intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and academic and research institutions (see annex). The Secretary-General of the United Nations was represented by Mr. Jan Martenson, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva. Mr. Munzer Anabtawi, Co-ordinator of the Advisory Services Section, United Nations Centre for Human Rights, was Chairman/Rapporteur of the Seminar.

Agenda

The agenda for the Seminar was based on three background papers and included:

Teaching of human rights, through the training of law enforcement personnel, lawyers, judges, etc., and consideration of the question: international standards *v.* actual institutional practice (background paper prepared by Mr. Danilo Turk, Professor of International Law, Institute on International Law and International Organizations, Ljubljana University, Yugoslavia; member and Rapporteur of the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities);

Teaching of human rights to teachers at all levels, including those at police academies, attention to be focused on questions of discipline(s), contents and methods (background paper prepared by Mr. Karel Vasak, Legal Adviser, World Tourism Organization, Madrid, Spain; formerly Director, Division of Human Rights and Peace, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO));

Non-formal education and methods and their target groups—parents, religious leaders, labour union leaders, professional associations, village councils, etc., addressing the questions: individual and collective rights *v.* duties, and inductive teaching (real life situations) (background paper prepared by Mr. Christopher G. Weeramantry, Professor of International Law, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia).

Discussions followed the presentations and are also reflected in this report. The list of participants is annexed.

Opening session

The Seminar was opened by Mr. Martenson. In his statement, he emphasized the triangular relationship existing between legislation, implementation and information/education. While the legislative process had basically already achieved its major milestones, implementation of the body of norms and standards in the field of human rights was now the highest priority. He pointed out the importance of implementing international human rights instruments. In this context, he referred to the possibilities offered by the enhanced United Nations programme of advisory services and technical assistance in the field of human rights, available to all Member States upon request. As to information/education, Mr. Martenson stressed the need for everyone, everywhere, to know about his or her own rights as an essential element towards the universal implementation of human rights norms and referred to the possibility that the international community might soon launch a world public information campaign for human rights engaging the complementary activities of the United Nations system, Governments and non-governmental organizations.

Ms. Kaisa Savolainen, on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO, reviewed the work of that organization in the field of human rights education. She emphasized the close interrelationship between international understanding, peace and human rights, and recalled the international congresses held by UNESCO, most recently in Malta in 1987, on questions related to the teaching of human rights.

The Chairman/Rapporteur, Mr. Anabtawi, outlined the Seminar programme, which was designed to engage participants in a fruitful dialogue based on three background papers prepared by highly qualified experts. They would, it was hoped, return to their Governments, organizations, teaching establishments, etc. with new ideas and convictions on which to base a more comprehensive approach to human rights education covering all sectors of the population.

I. Teaching of human rights through the training of law enforcement personnel, lawyers and judges and consideration of the question: international standards v. actual institutional practice

Mr. Turk emphasized in presenting his paper that human rights education was closely linked to the realization of human rights. This concept had two essential aspects: creating awareness of the existence and importance of the relevant human rights standards; and the implementation of these standards. To speak of implementation only was not enough; broad popular awareness of, and support for, human rights had to be taken into account as well.

The human rights of the individual were collateral to the duties of the individual towards the country to which he belonged, Mr. Türk said. Restrictions on the enjoyment of human rights should be clearly defined and limited in scope. The problems raised by the inclusion in basic United Nations human rights instruments of the notion of public order illustrated the delicate nature of the balance between fundamentally important human rights on the one hand and the justified concerns of social stability on the other. It was essential, therefore, that judges, police and other law enforcement officials should respect and adhere to existing international human rights standards in performing their functions. Hence the need for their awareness of the relevant human rights norms and teaching of human rights. In this regard he referred, among other things, to the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and its implementation as well as to relevant instruments prohibiting torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Education and training projects

Mr. Turk made a number of suggestions for future United Nations action. These included the organization of a training course for law enforcement officers. The aim of this course would be to stimulate national, regional and international exchanges of opinion and experience on practical responses to actual situations. Standard-setting against torture constituted one of the most developed areas of work on international standards protecting human rights. Nevertheless, further training could make these stan-

dards more effective. He believed that the question of the duty of law enforcement officials to disobey orders from a superior to carry out torture could be dealt with in training programmes. Regional seminars and courses could be organized by the United Nations through its Advisory Services Programme to help eradicate and prevent acts of torture. Mr. Türk felt that to promote awareness and consideration of the draft body of principles on the use of force and firearms by law enforcement officials was potentially important, both for its incorporation in domestic legal systems and for the purpose of training law enforcement officials.

Specific plans of action and training programmes for law enforcement officials should also cover the problem of ensuring respect for human rights and the rule of law, while handling crisis situations. Such training programmes should include sessions devoted to non-discrimination against foreigners. Among the most sensitive issues affecting foreigners were those which related to their expulsion. Therefore, knowledge of the relevant international instruments should be included. It might also be appropriate to prepare a manual on the code of ethics concerning the treatment of prisoners which would be distributed to all personnel of penal institutions and other law enforcement officials. This manual could also serve as a teaching aid during the training programmes.

As lawyers and judges played a particularly important role in the realization of human rights, Mr. Türk said, their training must take this fact into account. The observance of human rights standards still depended on the quality of the administration of justice. Therefore, in every form of training, the independence and impartiality of the judiciary must be at the centre of teaching endeavours. This, he suggested, could be achieved through the organization of international consultations, perhaps in the framework of the United Nations Advisory Services Programme, and by the strengthening of teaching programmes on international human rights standards at law schools.

Concerning the teaching of human rights at the university level, he suggested the preparation of an international textbook for use in law schools, under the auspices of the United Nations or the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), setting out the fundamentals of universally accepted human rights standards. The textbook would then be translated into a number of national languages so as to give it the widest possible exposure.

Discussion

Mr. Neudek, representing the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs reviewed the work of the United

Nations in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice. He recommended that the Seminar focus its attention on assessing the achievements recorded, as well as on the difficulties encountered in ensuring the effective implementation of norms and standards. On many occasions human rights were infringed within criminal justice mechanisms largely because the systems were understaffed and fell short of requirements. Problems, therefore, could not be resolved, leading to unjustifiable restrictions and repression. An effective way to protect human rights was to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system so that it operated in accordance with the rule of law. Some of the United Nations training courses organized under the Advisory Services Programme should cover the teaching of standards and norms in the administration of justice.

Many speakers in the discussion emphasized that human rights education was a prerequisite for the effective implementation of human rights, and especially of international human rights rights standards. Many people, including judges, lawyers, policemen and other law enforcement officials might not have the necessary knowledge of this subject. Moreover, the teaching of international human rights law should be introduced not only as a branch of international law, but also as an aspect of other branches of law. Some participants pointed out that the content of international human rights law was currently undergoing significant change, especially in the field of humanitarian law, refugee studies and the treatment of foreigners. One participant said that international human rights law had now become international common law.

Participants gave attention to the approach that should be taken by such professionals as judges, lawyers and law enforcement officials in the teaching of human rights. As they were generally absorbed in their daily tasks, they did not have enough time to obtain information on, and widen their knowledge of, developments in the area of international human rights law. International, regional and national seminars, training courses, workshops, etc., in the field of human rights, would be most beneficial to them. It was also very important for judges and lawyers to maintain contact with international lawyers and human rights workers. As international human rights provisions were more general in nature than those found in national legislation, they were often difficult to apply in domestic courts. However, a more complete indoctrination of judges to human rights issues would certainly bring domestic human rights law closer to international standards. It was also pointed out that even within the established framework of the Council of Europe's human rights teaching programme, teaching about human rights was not altogether easy.

Several speakers referred to the difficulties of teaching about human rights in developing countries, not only because of prevailing economic and social conditions, but also because of the political climate. Moreover,

despite the need to learn about international human rights standards, it was difficult to take this knowledge down to the grass-roots level when the majority of people were illiterate. In this regard, the role of the United Nations Advisory Services Programme was emphasized. Some participants thought that the teaching of human rights to policemen and other law enforcement officials should receive more attention, as such officials were usually directly involved in situations where human rights might be infringed. Restrictions in the use of force and firearms were strongly advocated.

Many speakers favoured translation of human rights teaching materials and international human rights instruments into different languages, while pointing out that exact translations were not always easy and were very costly.

The idea of issuing a textbook for human rights teaching was endorsed by several participants. One guideline recommended for the preparation of such a book was that facts, illustrations and cases should form the basis of teaching instead of material limited to abstract written texts. This was considered important not only in order to make the teaching interesting, but also because of widespread illiteracy among the populations in some countries. One participant suggested setting up a group during the Seminar to develop these ideas.

The discussion illustrated that national efforts had been extensive, especially in countries where the situation was coming back to normal after a period characterized by gross violations of human rights. In such countries, it was suggested that it was necessary not only to punish those who had formerly violated human rights, but also to create an awareness among the citizens of their protected rights.

Mutual concerns

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) submitted a detailed list of its efforts in the field of human rights where the areas of concern to the United Nations and the ILO were mutual, such as freedom of association, freedom from discrimination, the right to work, the right to social security and protection of children and youth. Any teaching on human rights, therefore, should involve the teaching of ILO standards also. The content of human rights teaching was not only a matter of ethics, but also a matter of positive law.

Mr. Huu, for ILO, mentioned three areas of importance. First of all, teaching should deal with the problems that arose when national law did not necessarily comply with international standards. Secondly, the role of supervisory mechanisms should be emphasized so as to offer an effective

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HUMAN RIGHTS

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World Campaign for Human Rights

remedy when human rights violations occurred. Thirdly, a good judge or lawyer must inform and advise a citizen about the possibility of bringing that person's case before an international monitoring body, if national remedies were exhausted or, for some reason, were not sufficient.

Mr. Lüthi, representing the International Human Rights Internship Programme, proposed the international exchange of classes of students between 13 and 15 years of age, in order to confront them with their own conception of human rights and to develop their respect for different cultures. He invited the United Nations Advisory Services Programme, the Division of Equality of Opportunity in the Field of Education and Special Programmes of UNESCO, the United Nations Development Programme (and its Information Service) and other competent experts to collaborate in the project.

Conclusions

In his summing-up, Mr. Türk again stressed the importance of teaching police forces about human rights standards, and called on judges' associations to arrange international and regional conferences for the purpose of exchanging views and sharing experiences. These were feasible ways of becoming informed about international standards and developments within the field of human rights, he felt. Mr. Türk also encouraged the creation of regional human rights institutes and centres, which offered great educational potential. Whether human rights should be taught as a separate subject at law schools or as an integrated part of the whole curriculum should not be the subject of a conclusion at the present time. He called on the participants to develop their views on this matter for a future debate.

There were valid reasons for supporting the proposal to prepare a textbook because, among other reasons, the existing material seemed to be too voluminous and lacked coherence. This fact constituted a major problem for students, who were not able to obtain an overall view of the subject, Mr. Türk said.

He suggested the book should address itself to all university faculties, not only to law faculties, since the subject was of special concern to everyone. In order to proceed with the project, which had produced mixed reactions among the participants, Mr. Türk proposed to submit an outline of both the advantages and disadvantages of producing a standardized textbook to the United Nations Secretary-General, so that the idea might be followed up through the Advisory Services Programme. He then summarized the various types of methodology that had been outlined during the debate. First, the quasi-legislative technique was useful. Secondly, case studies were necessary to help people understand why the standards were

formulated. Thirdly, the experience and work of non-governmental organizations could be used in preparing teaching materials. Furthermore, it seemed important that the international human rights review procedure should be taught so that the entire system would become less abstract for the public. Lastly, international seminars and courses were an essentiel element of the teaching process.

Specific matters to be taught included the implementation of humanitarian law and the treatment of refugees. In this respect, the education of members of political parties was essential, since they formed part of the legislative structure and influenced the application of international standards in domestic law.

The right to development, including legal aid to the poor, also had to be noted when discussing human rights teaching. Mr. Türk mentioned the important role of the International Human Rights Internship Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights. As many speakers had mentioned during the discussion, teachers of human rights in many countries needed special protection against the potential abuses of authorities. Such protection was necessary because many Governments unfortunately perceived human rights teaching as subversive. The teachers concerned were often subjected to restrictions of a financial nature or, even more alarmingly, to direct violations of their own human rights.

II. Teaching of human rights to teachers at all levels, including those at police academies with attention focused on questions of discipline(s), contents and methods

Mr. Vasak traced in his paper the historic development of the teaching of human rights. Notably: 1948, the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; 1968, International Human Rights Year, marked by the Teheran Conference and the recognition by the international community of the merit of efforts then being made for the development of understanding of human rights through teaching; 1969, the creation of the International Institute for Human Rights in Strasbourg, which established training and teaching as a means of promoting human rights; and 1978, an International Congress organized by UNESCO on the teaching of human rights. There was a need to assess the results of this four-phase development in the teaching of human rights in order to see more clearly what had been achieved and to determine any shortcomings. The verb "to teach" had a threefold meaning: "To cause to be learned", "to educate", and "to liberate the spirit". If the triple significance of teaching was applied to the subject of human rights, it became clear that human rights had an essential place not only at all academic levels, but also at all moments in life.

The omnipresence of the State in all sectors of the economy, and other centres of power close to the State could become even more of a threat to human rights, he argued. He mentioned, among other factors, the power of mass communication, of the medical establishment and of those who control the data banks.

On the subject of teaching human rights to teachers, Mr. Vasak asked whether the teaching of human rights was a human right in itself, and if so, should it benefit from international protection. He also questioned whether it was the right and duty of a teacher to teach human rights. The idea of drafting a convention that would provide such protection to teachers had been initiated in 1978. The proposed convention had not materialized because its principal beneficiaries, the teachers of human rights, rather than being seen as a separate group, tended to be confused with the rest of humanity. Hence, the convention would have been no more than a generalized convention for the protection of mankind and not one specifically geared to teachers of human rights.

Mr. Vasak also discussed the different levels in the teaching of human rights and educational materials which would be appropriate at each level.

In primary schools there was not so much a need to teach human rights, but rather to develop a child's conscience, so as to ensure that children acquired tolerance towards one another, a sense of responsibility for their actions and a critical mind. The publication *Draw Me a Human Right* deserved wider circulation in this respect. A teacher could only teach human rights if his or her training had included a substantial human rights content. He further suggested that perhaps international trade union organizations could establish a systematic programme of development of human rights by primary school teaching.

Human rights teaching had never been fully established at the secondary level, he felt, although the teacher at this level was better prepared to integrate the subject in school programmes. However, it was at the advanced (tertiary) level that a spectacular development of human rights teaching had been observed. He stressed the need to co-ordinate and facilitate access to human rights documentation.

Professional groups

Mr. Vasak suggested that human rights teaching programmes would be of benefit to certain professional categories, such as journalists, the police and members of political parties. They would thus become more sensitive to the existence of such rights and to the need to respect them.

For journalists, specialized human rights teaching concerning both freedom of opinion and expression as well as the right to honour and reputation would be appropriate. In the case of law enforcement officials, he suggested that training was essential to prevent the committing of acts contrary to human rights. International professional police organizations ought to take the lead in the organization of training courses on human rights for police officers.

He added that political parties should establish secretariats to study human rights. The United Nations could organize a seminar bringing together office-bearers of political parties with the aim of organizing human rights teaching for their members.

Discussion

In dealing with various aspects of the background paper, participants questioned, among other matters, whether human rights teaching could, or

even should, be neutral. Several speakers thought that human rights teaching had to be carried out with conviction, especially in developing countries. Here, the discussion touched upon the problem of how certain Governments viewed human rights teaching. Many Governments perceived the subject as subversive and banned teaching materials. To try to overcome this difficulty it was considered very important to persuade the authorities to understand that human rights teaching included not only civil and political rights, but also economic, cultural and social rights, and possibly even the right to solidarity.

The idea of a convention concerning human rights teaching, including provisions for the protection of human rights teachers, was commented upon by several participants. One of the arguments against such an instrument was the great number of existing provisions, and these were considered to be sufficient.

It would be more appropriate to arrange seminars and prepare textbooks which could be used as sources of information for teachers. If a textbook were compiled, it should take account of regional experience and differences. It was generally acknowledged, however, that such a project would run into difficulties not only because of the financial implications of translating the book, but also because of the need to agree on a teaching method and an interpretation of the existing human rights instruments. References were made to similar undertakings, e.g. under the auspices of the Council of Europe, where major problems had arisen. Nevertheless, the idea was viewed positively and it was also suggested that the UNESCO publication edited by Mr. Vasak, *International Dimensions of Human Rights*, should be re-edited and translated into various languages.

The importance of educating journalists was emphasized by a number of participants in addressing the question of target groups for the teaching of human rights. It was hoped that journalists, once sensitized to a human rights approach, would reflect this in their daily work. Several participants outlined their national experiences in utilizing the mass media to disseminate information on, and facilitating public discussions concerning, the protection of human rights.

Participants then outlined the experience of their countries and organizations in the method and content of the teaching of human rights. It was stressed that the teaching of human rights should exist at the primary, secondary and advanced levels. Each level should have a specific programme aimed at promoting the knowledge of human rights and liberty. At the primary level, teaching should aim to instil in children a sense of tolerance and awareness of their rights and those of others. Specific examples taken from everyday life would contribute to an excellent understanding of human rights in the education of a child. At the secondary level, the teaching of human rights could be incorporated into various existing

subjects; at higher levels, the teaching of human rights could be emphasized in relation to law, in particular to the international law of human rights. The teaching of human rights in police academies and schools of journalism was important. Such teaching would seek to build an awareness of both the existence of, and the need to respect, the rights of all those with whom the trainees and students came in contact. Other forms of teaching human rights, including seminars, symposiums, training courses, exhibitions and specialized publications, were also mentioned.

Ms. Prindezis, for the World Association for the School as an Instrument of Peace, reviewed the Association's activities and publications. Ms. Barbier, representing the International Training Centre on Human Rights and Peace Teaching, shared the Centre's experiences with the participants and gave an account of recent seminars and meetings.

The need to promote an awareness of rights in children was emphasized. The teaching of human rights helped to equip boys and girls with a respect for differences in outlook and to confront their own conception of human rights.

Participants shared the view that the preparation of a standard handbook on human rights was not essential, even if it would facilitate the task of teachers, as the human rights concept itself should recognize that various views on the understanding of life and society existed and should be tolerated.

Conclusions

Mr. Vasak summarized the discussion. He said that human rights teaching would require the co-operation of Governments, but that activists did not always have to wait for Governments to take the initial steps. He took note of reservations made about the elaboration of a convention on human rights teaching and agreed with the majority of participants that the convention might not be necessary.

On the status of human rights under international law, Mr. Vasak said the essential question was whether the citizen had the ways and means to have his or her case heard. The need to exhaust national remedies before a case was admitted for consideration by an international or regional body should not be too strictly insisted upon in international human rights law.

A consensus seemed to exist among the participants that a global approach to the teaching of human rights would be necessary. Teaching should be based on equality and freedom; moral and human rights as compared to duties and responsibilities; the legal dimension of human rights; and, finally, the practical dimension of the teaching of human rights.

Mr. Vasak encouraged an ongoing, permanent and multidisciplinary approach to teaching that would give particular attention to regional differences. The teaching of human rights was a legal right, he added, which was implicitly recognized in the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Mr. Vasak also drew attention to two approaches to the training of teachers of human rights, requiring separate methods for generalists and specialists respectively.

In the training of police personnel, he suggested revising existing manuals instead of preparing new books, since the latter might be perceived by the police as a criticism of existing material.

Mr. Vasak for his part supported the idea of a convention or some other form of international instrument to promote the teaching of human rights. He emphasized the important role of non-governmental and specialized institutions in the field of human rights, and suggested that UNESCO and the United Nations intensify their co-operation and co-ordination. Technical assistance to promote human rights teaching was of great value, and the existence of fellowships at national and international levels was essential. He was in favour of the exchange of human rights teachers between countries. Each country should envisage setting up a human rights institute to promote respect for and observance of human rights at all levels.

III. Non-formal education and methods and their target groups—parents, religious leaders, labour union leaders, professional associations, village councils, etc.: individual and collective rights *v.* duties and inductive teaching

Human rights, Mr. Weeramantry emphasized, in presenting his paper, were an invaluable part of community life. Education was the means by which human rights could be preserved and enriched, which in turn explained the vital need for more education on the subject.

There should be a multidisciplinary approach to the teaching of human rights. Teaching should tackle the subject from various angles: historical, philosophical, religious, legal, social, cultural, political and economic. In each of these areas there should be an appropriate combination of conceptual notions with practical illustrations.

Different cultures and civilizations accorded dignity and rights to the individual, though they might have arrived at this result by taking various historical or philosophical routes.

If human rights teaching was to be meaningful and related to practical issues, it should strive to discover at what point the average, well-meaning citizen could become unwittingly a perpetrator of human rights violations through inaction. He gave the example of *apartheid* as a violation of human rights.

Mr. Weeramantry suggested that the subject of international co-operation on the environment must be incorporated in the teaching of human rights. He emphasized the international aspect of environmental problems and development, which had been receiving increasing attention, and the relationships between the arms race, human rights and development.

The European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights, he said, offered a model of regional human rights arrangements. Human rights workers everywhere could gain much inspiration and guidance from studying regional developments in human rights.

On human rights teaching materials, he noted the existence in Australia of a programme consisting of films and other material to be used during

National Law Week in the State of Victoria. The appointment in Japan of Civil Liberties Commissioners was a subject meriting further examination by the participants.

Several activities could be useful for the future work of human rights teachers. Primarily, when teachers were conditioned to have inquiring minds in relation to human rights, they would communicate that spirit of inquiry and enthusiasm to those whom they would in turn teach and influence. Their specialities might be history or science or engineering, but they would tend to infuse into their courses a human rights content, teaching their students to be conscious of the human rights issues involved. The same considerations applied to all who were in positions of leadership or influence. Between them and the public there were numerous points of contact offering the possibility, not only through the procedures and structures they followed and devised, but also through example and conversation to induce in the public mind a greater sensitivity to, and appreciation of, human rights. The teaching of human rights should be free of dogmatism and indoctrination; such methods tended to provoke an adverse reaction, stifling rather than promoting a commitment to human rights. It was also important that the teacher of human rights should assist students in recognizing the many institutional sources of denials of human rights. The student should be alerted to the possibility of disharmony between systems and social needs and trained to detect them within legal, educational, religious, communication, corporate, industrial and other systems.

Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights everyone was entitled to a social and economic order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration could be fully attained. Human rights workers and students must therefore give attention to the problems of development, in relation to the terms of the Universal Declaration. The human rights teacher must also stress to students that the world of the future would not be merely a world of positive co-existence but one of active co-operation. This created the need to teach the concept of international co-operation, especially with regard to the environment. Human rights teachers and workers should concern themselves with environmental problems and the delicate balance between the need for development and environmental safeguards.

The armaments industry, Mr. Weeramantry considered, could be converted to peaceful ends. It was the responsibility of the teacher of human rights to set the student thinking about such possibilities. The human rights teacher should also alert the student to the risks of discrediting and belittling human rights which lay in the legal system itself, the bureaucracy, military/industrial/technological systems, land tenure systems, religious systems and the wider community.

The legal fraternity needed a greater human rights dimension. Every association of lawyers should have a human rights committee of the bar that concerned itself with: (*a*) propagating knowledge about human rights in the community, possibly through a young lawyers' section; (*b*) scrutinizing legislation from the human rights standpoint; (*c*) helping to provide a free human rights legal service; (*d*) educating members of the bar on current developments in human rights; (*e*) incorporating in the ethical code a duty to protect fundamental human freedoms; (*f*) incorporating the subject of human rights in law school curricula; and (*g*) assisting and encouraging foreign lawyers in their struggles for the assertion of human rights.

Judges should also be instructed in human rights, as they especially were engaged in the process of developing law. Judges should make decisions not only in terms of statutes and precedents, but also in terms of human rights norms and declarations. Mr. Weeramantry quoted other means of educating the judiciary from the Report of the Judicial Colloquium on the Domestic Application of International Human Rights Norms, held in Bangalore, India, in February 1988.

He suggested that a manual for the teaching of human rights should be produced, on a grade-by-grade basis, easily applicable to all major subjects. Teacher-training courses should also include human rights as a compulsory subject. Appropriate textbooks for this purpose might be produced under the aegis of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The subject of human rights should be mandatory for trainee police officers. Lectures should be delivered by experts with a manual of human rights especially applicable to the police. Every community needed to have a human rights centre, where citizens could come to discuss their human rights problems.

Mr. Weeramantry also suggested that all professional organizations could benefit by enlarging the exposure of their members to human rights norms and information. Moreover, there were many areas which bordered on or actively involved human rights matters, including some relating to the maintenance of life-support systems, *in vitro* fertilization, and neurosurgery. It was important that the concerned professional organizations addressed themselves to such matters and issue guidelines and ethical codes to their members. The personnel of local governments were another important target audience for human rights teaching at all levels. Teaching programmes for local officials should place special emphasis on the government traditions of the country in question.

He suggested in conclusion, that international trade unionism could lend a hand in promoting many causes today. It was important that trade unionists should be aware both of their own human rights and those of others if their strength was to be most usefully exercised.

Discussion

In the debate, Mr. Rüther, for Amnesty International, expressed satisfaction with the Seminar and the discussions, but added that no reference had been made to the question of teaching human rights to the military.

Many participants showed their interest in the teaching of human rights in primary and secondary schools, not as an additional subject, but as an integral part of courses in geography, history, science, etc. It was suggested that the possibility of organizing an exchange programme of classes of young students with their teachers, between countries of different cultures, to encourage a realization and consciousness of human rights, should be studied. Such exchanges could also promote the learning of languages of countries or regions where the languages were closely related to one another.

The protection of human rights, it was noted, had become a central element of action by Member States. It was not possible to protect human rights if a global vision of such rights did not exist. The teaching of human rights was, therefore, the essential means of bringing about change in human behaviour. It was no less important to explain to students why human rights were part of international relations. The relationship between peace and human rights should be stressed as well as the dangers of fascism and nazism.

At to the substance of the teaching of human rights, many participants underlined the importance of referring to the universal and international concept of human rights. Students should be given information and knowledge about various international measures of implementation in the field of human rights, such as reporting procedures, individual complaints procedures, ILO procedures and regional experiences.

Some participants felt that not only human rights law but also humanitarian law should be taught to students; although they had different mechanisms for implementation, they were related to each other.

Dealing with national efforts to promote human rights standards, several participants believed that the appointment of Civil Liberties Commissioners, as in Japan, was a unique and worthwhile challenge. A parallel mention was made of Chinese endeavours, through the Standing Committee of the National Congress, to teach a basic knowledge of law to lay people. It was stressed that people should know how to protect their own rights, respect the rights of others and carry out their responsibilities towards the community to which they belonged. The Japanese and Chinese participants gave further information on these non-formal education experiences in their respective countries.

Several participants described national human rights programmes and projects for the promotion, protection and education of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It was stressed that special efforts were needed in the countries of the third world to safeguard the basic rights of the people, such as the right to food and the right to education. The right to self-determination constituted the core of such rights.

Many speakers felt that human rights teaching was indispensable for specialists such as scientists, engineers, technicians and doctors as they were involved in scientific and technological work which potentially put human beings at risk.

Teaching human rights—in particular the existing international standards—to legislators, legal advisers to Governments, political parties and non-governmental organizations was extremely important. The role of local authorities in human rights teaching should be emphasized as they very often initiated human rights policies.

It was also the general view that young people should be the principal target for human rights teaching, as they would constitute the society of the future. In order to give them an international perspective, exchange programmes of young students between different countries would be most advantageous.

Recommendations adopted by UNESCO concerning international education in human rights defined the legal obligation of the State to carry out international human rights education. These recommendations, participants emphasized, recognized that peace and human rights were indivisible and interdependent.

Different civilizations had made their contributions to the formulation of human rights. In discussing the origins of rights, it was essential to draw on a variety of sources and materials.

Many members thought it necessary to bring out in teaching the dynamic nature of international human rights. Due to the developments in science and technology, the world was becoming smaller and people were gradually becoming aware that they belonged to the same international community.

Participants thought it desirable that all teachers should undergo human rights training and learn to become familiar with various ways of teaching, pedagogical tools, exercises and games, in order to promote and understand human rights thoroughly. It was pointed out, however, that to prepare and produce a standardized manual was difficult as teachers were drawn from different regions, sectors, subject areas, etc.

Participants from Congo and Togo reported on the forms of human rights teaching and training activities that had been undertaken in their respective countries. The participant from Togo informed the Seminar that a national human rights commission has recently been established in his country and outlined its current activities. It was the first body of its kind in Africa.

Conclusions

Mr. Weeramantry emphasized the importance of the right to self-determination in human rights teaching. Present human rights concepts were an amalgam of different ideas from various civilizations of the world and their universal character and diversity should not be forgotten. In referring to his recent book on Islamic jurisprudence and human rights, he said it was very clear that many of the West European concepts of law, including many of the international legal principles advocated, had in fact been developed from Islamic and other ideas from various parts of the world.

On the point raised by Amnesty International's representative, Mr. Weeramantry said that military personnel should study humanitarian law, international law and human rights law.

In a reference to the duties and responsibilities of the individual to promote and protect human rights, to eradicate *apartheid*, to seek alternatives to arms, etc., he stressed that everyone should act in appropriate ways to stop the continuation of gross violations of human rights. Given the serious economic and social situation in the developing regions of the world, he felt that even underdevelopment itself could be considered a violation of human rights. He suggested in conclusion the establishment of an international global trusteeship of limited resources in order to conserve the rights of future generations of mankind.

Informal discussions: some preliminary conclusions and recommendations

Three working groups were organized for informal discussions at the request of participants. The working groups presented the following conclusions and recommendations on 9 December:

Human rights teaching at the primary and secondary school levels

(*a*) In order to teach human rights to primary or elementary school pupils, it is necessary to use indirect methods. Teachers must start with the pupils' reality and thus allow them to develop principles;

(*b*) Even very young children know basic concepts such as fairness, therefore it is relatively easy to move from such ideas to rights and responsibilities, from class-room rules to school rules and on to universal rules;

(*c*) One of the basic aims of this exercise is to convey the significance of the concept of non-discrimination using very simple and practical methods;

(*d*) There are many different methods available to aid children in the understanding of such basic principles of human rights;

(*e*) It is extremely important to involve parents in any programme of human rights teaching;

(*f*) It is possible, at the secondary school level, to introduce the existence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while ensuring that any human rights education begins with the reality of the students' lives;

(*g*) It is unfortunate that participants had not been invited to bring examples of teaching materials from different countries;

(*h*) Teaching material should be shared at least at the regional level. A first step should be taken to ensure such dissemination through the establishment of regional desks at the United Nations Centre for Human Rights. Such desks could link up with regional offices or regional commissions where these existed;

(*i*) The suggestion made by the representative of the International Human Rights Internship Programme for student exchanges between different nations should be supported.

Human rights teaching at universities

(*a*) There is a need to teach the legalistic concept of human rights, while human rights teaching should take a multidisciplinary approach in fields such as political science, sociology, psychology, history and medical studies.

(*b*) It is important to exchange existing teaching and study material between countries;

(*c*) There is a need to organize regional seminars for students as well as professors and professionals to teach regional arrangements for the protection of human rights;

(*d*) Scholarships for studying human rights should be established and their number increased.

Informal human rights teaching

(*a*) More attention might be directed in the future to the equality of the sexes, to be reflected in the choice of speakers, presiding officials, and to the choice of topics or agenda items;

(*b*) Links between United Nations agencies could be strengthened by identifying areas of responsibility for collaboration;

(*c*) There is a need to emphasize the aspect of self-reliance in order to protect a person's human rights;

(*d*) The media could play a significant role in the protection and promotion of human rights;

(*e*) Suggestions contained in the report of the working group are important for the effective functioning of the United Nations and its agencies, serving also as guidelines for efforts by national, non-governmental organizations and individual projects.

Final meeting

At the final meeting of the Seminar on 9 December, Mr. Isaac Nguema, Chairman of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, addressed the participants, emphasizing the significance of commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration and of organizing the Seminar on that occasion.

The Chairman/Rapporteur of the Seminar, Mr. Anabtawi, offered the following conclusions:

Teaching was meant to indicate awareness, education and, ultimately, the liberation of the human mind and spirit. It was a continuing process;

What to teach? Generally speaking, the term meant combining awareness with education, to make known the intercultural background of the now universally accepted international standards on human rights, developed essentially in the wake of gross violations of these very rights during and between the two world wars in this century. The interrelationship between human rights and peace, development and environment should also be emphasized in this respect;

Whom to teach? First of all, those in a position directly to affect the basic human rights of the individual, be they law enforcement personnel, lawyers and judges, or the military when at war or when called upon to maintain security in times of emergency internal situations. Legislators who are in charge of drafting laws needed to be educated about international standards so that their legislation was in conformity with their countries' international obligations. Balancing those rights with the requirements of social stability and public order should not result in limitations beyond those needed in a democratic society for the respect of the rights of others, and with full respect for those rights which did not admit of derogation, even in times of emergency, and of the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Other professional categories, in medicine, engineering, technology, media, data banks, political parties, municipalities and other centres of power, such as village councils, labour union leaders, etc., also needed to learn about human rights. Basic regulations should not be limited to the organization of their respective professions, but should also include a code of ethics taking into account the impact of their activities on the basic human rights of others. Schoolchildren and students at all institutions, civil, police or military, should also be targets of this process;

Was it a right and a duty to learn or to teach about human rights? It was the right of everyone to learn about his or her rights and it was also the duty of those who knew better to disseminate whatever information they had about those rights. After all, this right was consecrated in universally recognized standards. It was embodied in the right to education in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as well as in article 19 (2) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which stated that everyone should have the right to receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art or through any other media of his or her choice. This obviously included the right of everyone to share information about the basic rights and freedoms of individuals;

How to teach? A multidisciplinary, global approach and differing methodologies should be adopted depending on the target group. Emphasis should be placed on the fact that knowledge of human rights was in the best interests of all. Means of imparting knowledge could range from seminars, training courses, the use of art and media, classroom instruction, the activities of non-governmental organizations, as well as those of national and regional institutions and centres for human rights. Activists and other committed persons could play major roles in the process;

Manuals containing information about national experiences, such as those of Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Japan and others exposed during the discussion, could be very useful. Equally so would be a digest of case law in the field of human rights emanating from international and regional courts or committees, in conveying the message to certain targets of the educational process;

The political will of those in power was indispensable to achieve the purpose of teaching of human rights. Neither the international legislative process, which was almost completed, nor ratification of the international instruments, however important and essential, could automatically guarantee the realization of human rights. Attention to meeting the basic needs of people everywhere was necessary, particularly in the developing countries. If, in the international arena, priority was given to the right of peoples to self-determination, and their right to a fair share of the world's resources, economy and trade, success would be achieved.

ANNEX

List of participants

GOVERNMENTS

Argentina

Ms. Maria Teresa FLORES, Dirección de Derechos Humanos, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto, Profesora de Derechos Humanos

Australia

Mr. Ralph PETTMAN, University Lecturer

Mr. Bill BARKER, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations, Geneva*

Belgium

Mr. Paul MORREN, Education Inspector

Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

Mr. Nikolai ROZINE, Professor of Social Sciences of the V. I. Lenin Byelorussian State University

Canada

Mr. Douglas RAY, Associate of the Canadian Human Rights Foundation, Director of the Foundation's Education Section

China

Mr. Qun GUO, Researcher, Supreme People's Court of China

Mr. Yishan ZHANG, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations, Geneva*

Congo

Mr. Armel Sébastien OKO-PUBELET, Chief, Programme Section, Research and Planning Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Cuba

Mr. Eduardo DE LA CRUZ LOPEZ, Funcionario del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Especialista en derechos humanos

Ms. Marianela ELBRUS ECHAVARRIA, Deuxieme Secretaire, Mission permanente, Geneve

Cyprus

Ms. Rea YIORDAMLIS, Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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* Alternates

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Czechoslovakia

Mr. Otto KUNZ, Director, Institute for International Relations and International Law attached to the Faculty of Law, Charles University, Prague

Denmark

Ms. Marianne LEVY, High Court Judge, former Chairman of the Council of Europe's Expert Committee on Promotion of Information and Education in the Field of Human Rights

Egypt

Mr. Salah EL DIN AMER, Professor of International Law, Faculty of Law, Cairo University

France

Mr. François AUDIGIER, Director of Research, National Institute of Pedagogical Research

Gambia

Ms. Mariam DENTON, Principal State Counsel, Ministry of Justice

German Democratic Republic

Mr. Manfred MOHR, Professor of International Law, Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic, Institute for Theory of State and Law

Guatemala

Ms. Delia QUINONEZ CASTILLO DE TOCK, Escritora, Promotora cultural, Docente, Directora de Divulgacion de la Secretaria de Relaciones Publicas de la Presidencia de la Republica

Iceland

Mr. Sigthor MAGNUSSON, Director of Studies, Ministry of Education

Indonesia

Mr. Mardjono RIKSODIPUTRO, Dean, Faculty of Law, University of Indonesia, Department of Education and Culture

Japan

Mr. Eiji MATSUNAGA, Chief Researcher, Research and Training Institute, Ministry of Justice

Mr. Shozo FUJITA, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations, Geneva*

Jordan

Mr. Mohammad Ahmed HAMDAN, President of the University of Yarmouk, Irbed, Jordan

Kuwait

Ms. Muna AL GHONAIM, Adviser, Human Rights Section, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Malta

Mr. Giovanni BONELLO, Human Rights Adviser and Lecturer

Mauritania

Mr. Mohamed Saleck Ould Mohamed LEMINE, Chief, United Nations Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation

Mexico

Mr. Luis Angel Dominguez BRITO, Asesor de la Dirección en Jefe para Asuntos Multilaterales, Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, Tlatelolco, Mexico

Nepal

Mr. Iswar Bahadur SHRESTHA, Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice

Mr. Keshab Raj JHA, Under-Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Mr. Gopendra Bahadur PANDEY, Under-Secretary, Home Ministry*

New Zealand

Ms. Rae JULIAN, Commissioner of the New Zealand Human Rights Commission

Mr. Robert LUDBROOK, Lawyer, specializing in family law and law relating to children*

Nigeria

Mr. Simon Ikechukwu OKONJI, Senior Counsellor, Ministry of External Affairs

Ms. Christy Ezim MBONU, Second Secretary in Charge of Human Rights, Permanent Mission of Nigeria of the United Nations, Geneva*

Sudan

Mr. Mohd Izzat Babiker EL DEIR, Ambassador, Director-General of Technical Co-operation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Togo

Mr. Nolana TA AMA, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Togo to the United Nations at New York, responsible for legal and social questions

Tunisia

Mr. Mohamed CHARFI, President of the Tunisian Human Rights League, Professor of Law, University of Tunis

Mr. Sadok CHAABANE, Professor of Law, University of Tunis

Uganda

Mr. Francis J. AYUMI, Solicitor-General, Ministry of Justice

Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic

Mr. Vladimir BOUTKEVITCH, Doctor of Jurjdical Sciences, Director of the Institute of International Relations and International Law of Kiev State University

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Mr. Yury KOLOSOV, Head, Chair of International Law, Institute of International Relations, Moscow

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Mr. Henry STEEL, Head of United Kingdom Delegation to Commission on Human Rights

United States of America

Ms. Charlotte M. PONTICELLI, Director of the Policy and Planning Staff, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, Department of State

Mr. Stuart H. LOPPE, Counsellor, Political and Legal Affairs, United States Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Geneva*

Mr. Thomas A. JOHNSON, Counsellor, Political and Legal Affairs, United States Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Geneva*

Uruguay

Mr. Washington Fredy BALIERO, Lawyer, Professor of International Law, the University of Montevideo, Member of the Ministry of Foreign Relations

Viet Nam

Ms. Dinh Thi Minh HUYEN, Deputy Director, Department for General Political Affairs

Zimbabwe

Mr. David Makhumbini ZAMCHIYA, Permanent Secretary for Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs

OBSERVERS

Ethiopia

Ms. Worku NADEW, Second Secretary, Ethiopian Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Geneva

Hungary

Mr. Peter GONDOR, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations, Geneva

Mr. Andras GYURIS, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Hungary to the United Nations, Geneva

UNITED NATIONS ORGANS AND BODIES

Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs

Mr. Kurt NEUDEK, Social Affairs Officer, Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch

UNITED NATIONS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

International Labour Organisation

Mr. Huu Tuong DAO, Co-ordinator for Human Rights Questions

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Ms. Kaisa SAVOLAINEN, Director, Division of Equality of Educational Opportunity and Special Programmes

World Health Organization

Mr. Dominich DEVLIN, Senior Legal Officer

Mr. Claude-Henri VIGNES, Legal Counsel

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Mr. Andrew DRZEMCZEWSKI, Legal Administrator, Directorate of Human Rights, Council of Europe

EXPERTS

Mr. Danilo TURK, Professor of International Law, Institute of International Law and International Organizations, Ljubljana University, Yugoslavia

Mr. Karel VASAK, Legal Adviser, World Tourism Organization, Madrid, Spain

Mr. Christopher G. WEERAMANTRY, Professor of Law, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

SPECIAL GUEST

Mr. Isaac NGUEMA, President, African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Libreville, Gabon

OBSERVERS

Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

Soroptimist International
Ms. Sonia HEPTONSTALL

Amnesty International
Mr. Otmar RUTHER

Andean Commission of Jurists
Mr. Luis MENDEZ

Baha'i International Community
Mr. Wytze BOS

Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers)
Mr. Martin MACPHERSON

International Association of Judges
Mr. Jacques DROIN

International Committee of the Red Cross
Mr. André TSCHIFFELI

International Movement for Fraternal Union Among Races and Peoples
Mr. C. M. EYA NCHAMA

International Centre of Sociological, Penal and Penitentiary Research and Studies
Mr. Jiri TOMAN

International Human Rights Internship Program
Mr. Jean-Claude LUTHI

International Union of Police Federations
Mr. Manfred BIENERT

World Association for the School as an Instrument of Peace (EIP)
Ms. Monique PRINDEZIS

Academic and Research Institutions

Association of International Consultants on Human Rights (CID)
Mr. Daniel DEVAUD, Barrister, Professor of law

International Training Centre on Human Rights and Peace Teaching
Ms. Mireille BARBIER, teacher

Comité d'appui pour des groupes et mouvements independants de jeunes engagés dans des activités de protection et de promotion des droits de l'homme (CODAP)
Mr. Yves LADOR, President

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